

September 1, 2015

Dear Organic Producer/Handler:

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) is pleased to announce the availability of funds to help Nebraska organic producers and handlers pay for costs associated with the National Organic Program (NOP) organic certification. Eligible producers and handlers can participate in the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program, and can receive 75 percent of their annual NOP certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750, for each NOP certification you hold.

To be eligible, producers and handlers must be currently certified or have received NOP certification between October 1, 2014, and September 30, 2015. All operations, including acres certified, must be located within the borders of the state of Nebraska.

Enclosed in this mailing is (1) Application for Cost-Share Funding; and (2) Instructions for completing the Application. The completed Application and all supporting documentation **must be postmarked by November 7, 2015**, to be eligible for cost-share funding. Applications received after November 7, 2015, will not be processed and will not be eligible for funding.

Supporting documents for a first-year NOP certified producer and/or handler will include a copy of your NOP certificate, dated between October 1, 2014, and September 30, 2015, proof of expense for the certificate, and a W-9 IRS form. Producers and handlers who were certified before this year do not need to submit a copy of your certificate or a W-9 unless business name or address has changed.

All applicants need to submit proof of expense. Proof can be a copy of an itemized invoice marked "paid" with a zero balance, or a copy of an itemized invoice and a copy of a cancelled check. If your certifying agency has notified you that they are sending in payment proof for you, you don't need to send another copy. Only costs related to NOP certification qualify for cost-share funding.

It should be noted that the funds available for this program are limited. Applications will be processed as they are received. In the event that demand exceeds available funds, awards will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis.

I hope you will participate in this program. If you have questions or would like more information about the program, please contact me at 800-422-6692 or by e-mail at steve.martin@nebraska.gov.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Martin", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Steve Martin
Ag Promotion Coordinator

Enclosures
AGPOL.doc (08/15)

Instructions for Completion of Application for Cost-Share Funding

National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program
Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA)

Applications will only be considered valid when all required pieces are submitted. Applications must be postmarked by **November 7, 2015**.

1. **Please Note: Applications for funding will be processed in the order they are received. In the event that demand exceeds available funds, awards will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis.**

Full instructions for each piece are listed below. If you have questions about the application process, please call prior to mailing the application.

Contact – Steve Martin, 800-422-6692 or steve.martin@nebraska.gov.

- Completed applications must have all required pieces:
 1. Completed application.
 2. Proof of certification – dated between October 1, 2014, and September 30, 2015 (*only required for first year of certification).
 3. Itemized Proof of Expense – must show that expenses were paid for National Organic Plan (NOP) certification.
 4. W-9 – IRS Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification Form (*only required for new applicants or if business/owner name or address has changed).

Application Form

Please make corrections as needed.

1. **Contact Information**

- a. Person/business name, if different than auto filled information please submit a new W-9.
- b. Please include a telephone number.
- c. Check box for Type of Certification.
- d. Cost-Share Funds are taxable state income.

2. **Location**

- a. If same as mailing address, put “same.” If different, fill out address or directions.

3. **Certification Information**

- a. Include name of certifying agency.
- b. Include a photocopy of NOP certificate dated between October 1, 2014, and September 30, 2015, (only required if this is your 1st year of being certified).

4. **Proof of Expenses** – Enter total amount paid for NOP certification.

- a. Supporting documents of NOP expenses include either:
 - A photocopy of a paid itemized invoice with a zero balance.
 - OR -
 - A photocopy of an itemized invoice **AND** copies of cancelled checks.

*** Note:** Some certifying agencies have sent proof of expense documents directly to us. If your certifier has notified you of this, you do not need to send proof of expenses.

5. United States Citizenship Attestation

- a. Check the appropriate box.
- b. Please sign, date, and print name of person whom check will be made out to.

Additional Materials

1. W-9

- a. Name on the W-9 should be the same as the person/business that will receive payment and same as name on application and attestation section.
- b. Name on W-9 should match the Social Security number (if used) or Federal Tax Identification number and the signature at the bottom.
- c. DO NOT list multiple people on the W-9.
- d. A W-9 can be printed from the IRS web site at www.irs.gov.

Program Details

1. Operations, including acres certified, must be located within the borders of the state of Nebraska.
2. Applicants for cost-share funding must receive organic certification or certification renewal between October 1, 2014, and September 30, 2015, to be eligible for funding.
3. Certification must be performed by a certifying agent that is accredited by the USDA in the National Organic Program.
4. Only costs related to certification to the NOP qualify for funding. Costs for certification for other standards are not eligible.
5. Qualified producers or handlers are eligible for funding of 75 percent of their annual certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750, for each NOP certificate.
6. **Applications for funding will be processed in the order they are received. In the event that demand exceeds available funds, awards will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis.**

All applications must be postmarked by November 7, 2015.

If you have questions, call Steve Martin at (800) 422-6692, or e-mail at steve.martin@nebraska.gov.

Send all required documents to:

Nebraska Department of Agriculture
Organic Cost-Share Program
P.O. Box 94947
Lincoln, NE 68509-4947

Application for Cost-Share Funding – Fiscal Year 2015

National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program
Nebraska Department of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture

Organic producers or handlers who are in possession of proof of certification to the Organic Foods Production Act and the implementing regulations of the National Organic Program, and who have documentation demonstrating costs have been incurred for certification, are eligible to receive cost-share funding of 75 percent of individual certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750 per certificate. Certification must have occurred between October 1, 2014, and September 30, 2015. **Applications must be postmarked by November 7, 2015.**

To apply for cost-share funding, complete this application form and send it, with the required supporting documentation, to:

Nebraska Department of Agriculture
National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program
P.O. Box 94947
Lincoln, NE 68509

Fully complete this form. If incomplete, it will not be processed, and you will not be eligible to receive cost-share funding.

☐ **Contact Information**

Contact Name: _____
(first name) (last name)

Person/Business Name on W-9: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Type of Certification (check all that apply): ☐ Crops ☐ Livestock ☐ Handling ☐ Wild Crops

Location

Farm/Business Location (if different from mailing address above, provide directions from nearest town):

☐ **Certification Information**

- Agency Name: _____
- Photocopy of NOP Certificate dated between 10/1/14 – 9/30/15 enclosed (only needed if this is your first year of certification)

☐ **Proof of Expense:** Total amount paid for National Organic Program (NOP) certification: \$ _____

- Evidence to support expenses must include either:
 - ✓ A photocopy of a paid itemized invoice with a zero balance, **OR**
 - ✓ A photocopy of an itemized invoice **AND** copies of cancelled checks.

United States Citizen Attestation (required)

For the purposes of complying with Neb. Rev. Stat. §§4-108 through 4-114, I attest as follows:

☐ I am a citizen of the United States.

– or –

☐ I am a qualified alien under the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, my immigration status and alien number are as follows: _____,

and I agree to provide a copy of my USCIS documentation, upon request.

I hereby attest that my response and the information provided on this form and any related applications for public benefits are true, complete, and accurate, and I understand that this information may be used to verify my lawful presence in the United States.

Print name of signatory: _____
(first, middle, last)

Signature of Applicant: _____ **Date:** _____